

Chapter 1: Indian Territory

It was the 19th century and the government of the United States of America was engaged in the oftentimes harsh and cruel task of relocating Indian Tribes in what was then known as Indian Territory. During this reproachful chapter in our history, countless Native American families were forcibly removed from the land of their forefathers and relocated to an unfamiliar and new land, -- one that would later become known as Oklahoma.

The exodus that brought these new inhabitants westward became aptly known as the Trail of Tears. Their journey was long and arduous and thousands died along the way. Ironically, the land that these new inhabitants would occupy was not the white man's land to give away but that which belonged to the nomadic tribes indigenous to this region, among which were the Caddo, Wichita, Ute, Quapaw, Osage, Kiowa and Comanche Indians.

In but a few short decades after this epic journey, the nation which granted the new lands to the Indian tribes began to disintegrate. Armed conflict broke out between the states. Indian Territory became engulfed in a bloody civil war. Having been lied to repeatedly by the government in Washington, many Indians, not surprisingly, sided with the Confederate States. After the war ended, and as punishment for their support of the Confederate States, the Five Civilized Tribes were forced by a series of treaties to give up their claim to all of their land in the western half of the Indian Territory. Most of the land ceded back to the United States would eventually become home for other Indian tribes. But some two million acres of land located in what is now central Oklahoma and which includes the land on which The Village was founded, was never given to any tribe for settlement. These lands became known as the Unassigned Lands.